



The HOWLING REPORTER

SPECIAL DOUBLE EDITION • NOVEMBER, 2022

**15 FULL-PAGE
RESCUE BIOS**

**ENRICHMENT
YOU CAN DO AT HOME**

**WOLVES &
RAVENS**

SPECIAL DOUBLE EDITION

4 year-old low-content male wolfdog

KENAI

SORRY WE'RE LATE!

We apologize for being so late with this issue! As we mentioned in the Fall Edition for 2021, we had to cut back from quarterly to (at least) bi-annual issues due to cost and labor. In addition, there have been a lot of changes at the sanctuary in 2022, and we've had to switch our priorities over to more resource-intensive projects.

That being said, we know how much our Howling Supporters love to stay updated on the sanctuary and our rescues, so to make up for being late this year, we've made sure this special double edition has more than twice the content of two single issues!

We truly appreciate the support of our readers, and couldn't do this work without you! Rest assured, our Spring Edition for 2023 will feature more information about the many challenges we've navigated this year.

Thank you for being there for us and our rescues. We can't wait to show you what we're planning for 2023!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS Ann Stravalle-Schmidt, *Board Chair* • Christine Crawford, *Treasurer* • Kimberly Kepler, *Secretary*

STAFF and VOLUNTEERS Brittany McDonald, *Executive Director* • Ariane Aquilina, *Animal Care Intern* • Mike Budd, *Building & Maintenance Volunteer*
Cecile Drymalski, *Gift Shop Assistant* • Katie Forbis, *Social Media and a Million Other Things* • Stephanie Leitch, *Gift Shop Manager*
Sierra Hinkle, *Animal Care Intern* • Seokhyun Hong, *Animal Care Intern* • Carlee Horstmann, *Animal Care Intern & Staff Member* • Cody Jones, *Animal Care Intern*
Jayme Juntunen, *Animal Care Intern* • Ulf Kruse, *Building & Maintenance* • Shaina Miller, *Education & Outreach Specialist, Intern Program Coordinator, Animal Care Specialist*
Kiera Newman, *Animal Care Intern* • Merry Smith, *Bookkeeper & Human Resources* • George Stapleton, *Building & Maintenance and Animal Care Volunteer*
Danielle Steakley, *Enrichment Program Coordinator & Animal Care Specialist* • Hana Tebelmann, *Animal Care Intern* • Tiffany Thurow, *Animal Care Intern*
Victoria Uliano, *Donor Relations, Grant Coordinator, Animal Care Specialist* • Tim Waite, *Web & Multimedia Developer, Wrangler of Photons & Pixels*
Rachel Wawrzynski, *Animal Care Intern* • Elizabeth Yoder, *Animal Care Intern*

Special thanks to our printer, The Printer's Press! www.printerspressinc.com

THINGS WE DID IN 2021

Here is a list of some of last year's highlights in support of our mission!

RESCUE

In 2021, Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary received a total of 393 intake requests for canines across the country.

Welcomed 16 new rescues from private homes and outside facilities. Each of these animals will spend the rest of their lives at the sanctuary.

Founded a "Wolfdog Protection Program" which exists to protect the identity of animals and/or their owners following their placement with Wild Spirit. In 2021, two animals were placed into this program.

Offered to take in an additional 11 animals including Fennec foxes, Australian dingoes, New Guinea singing dogs, wolves, and wolfdogs, all of which found placement outside of Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary.

Directly assisted in the placement of 28 additional animals from a variety of species.

Networked with other rescuers to secure homes for approximately 74 animals not included in the above statistics. Note: This is just an estimate, as not all intake "resolutions" are reported/recorded.

SANCTUARY

Completed 3 enclosure expansions and habitat improvements for our red foxes, dingoes, and domestic dogs. These allowed us to double the size of each enclosure and provide more natural and enriching features specific to each species.

Completed multiple habitat upgrades including the installation of top wire for 4 enclosures; installation of dig guard for 1 enclosure; construction of a cave house for 1 enclosure; and the addition of shift-pens for 2 enclosures.

We also designed and completed habitat renovations for one of our Arctic wolf enclosures, which included the construction of mounds and hills intended for climbing, denning, or hiding, and the addition of large rocks and other natural features to give the space more life.

Tore down 2 of our oldest enclosures—both of which were used to house our New Guinea singing dogs—allowing us to provide these canines with new and improved enclosures that are more appropriate for their species-specific needs.

Re-designed our public courtyard which included the removal of old fencing, addition of new picnic tables and benches, and the creation of a raised-bed garden.

Tore down and replaced old barrier fencing throughout the facility.

Demolished our old tour path in preparation for future ADA compliant renovations.

EDUCATION

Constructed a brand new Education Building complete with hands-on, interactive learning materials for all ages. This was made possible through the Hancock Family Foundation Grant received in 2021.

2 staff in the Animal Care Department completed the required coursework to become certified Euthanasia Technicians in the state of New Mexico, allowing for end-of-life assistance.

4 staff members in the Animal Care Department enrolled in Global Wildlife Resources' online Wildlife Capture and Chemical Immobilization Course and will officially complete their required certification in 2022.

Enrolled our new Grant Coordinator in an online grant writing class, completed in 2021.

Provided twice-weekly hands-on and academic learning labs for individuals participating in our Internship Program, allowing them to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the field of animal care.

Re-opened our doors to the general public, allowing for on-site educational opportunities through tours and Keeper Chats.

Participated in a limited number of outreach events (largely due to COVID-19) both in and out of state.

Implemented new Specialty Tour options including an Enrichment Tour and behind-the-scenes VIP experience.

ADDITIONAL

Purchased a replacement work truck.

Established or filled 6 new staff positions: Donor Relations & Grant Coordinator; Education and Outreach Specialist & Intern Program Coordinator; Animal Care Specialist; and 3 part-time Building and Maintenance Technicians.

Continued to expand and improve our Internship Program, taking on 14 interns in 2021.

Established additional staff/intern housing to help grow our team.

Completed multiple staff and intern housing upgrades to improve the quality of life for our on-site team members. This included the installation of cabinets and counters, furniture upgrades, purchase of portable cooking implements, and more.

16 Rescue Operations Conducted

We identified 16 wolves and wolfdogs we believed would benefit from lifetime care and who might be suitable matches for some of the rescues that had recently lost their companions.

67 Animals Provided Sanctuary

During 2021 we cared for 67 animals including New Guinea singing dogs, red foxes, Australian dingoes, coyotes, domestic dogs, and of course, wolves and wolfdogs.

Facebook Livestream Events

In order to satisfy our mission to educate the public during COVID-19, we performed several livestream events throughout the year, in addition to providing public education opportunities once we were able to re-open our doors.

LOOK WHAT
YOU
HELPED US DO!

NEW CRITTERS FOUND THEIR FOREVER HOME
16*
THANK YOU!

* One of the new rescues is not featured here because it is one of the animals in our Wolfdog Protection Program. The rescues featured here are "new" since our last publication of *The Howling Reporter*, in December, 2021.

Artemis



In May of 2022, Wild Spirit was contacted by a wolfdog breeder in Texas who asked if we would be interested in providing a lifelong home for her 4-week-old high-content wolfdog puppy. She explained that her original plan had been to keep the pup as one of her own. Not only did she have decades of experience owning and breeding wolfdogs, she also had the time, space, and resources to provide the pup with a long, happy, and healthy life. On the other hand, she knew her sweet little girl could experience that same level of love and care with a qualified sanctuary, where she could also help thousands of people each year learn about the plight of wolves in the wild.

In the end, she wanted to give her pup the opportunity to act as an ambassador for her species, and believed Wild Spirit was the best place for her to do so. We were honored by the offer, and agreed to welcome a new life into our world. She was named Artemis, after the goddess of wild animals and the hunt, and since the moment we picked her up, she has stolen the hearts of everyone on our team, and many of our supporters as well!

At 6-months old, she was paired with one of our new rescues, a mid-content wolfdog named Balto, and the two are absolutely thriving in their forever home!



Zeebie



Kiska

Kiska and Zeebie are both high-content wolfdogs that were rescued from New York after their previous facility—the Adirondack Wildlife Refuge Center—was forced to close its doors by the Department of Environmental Conservation. During their years spent living at AWRC, Kiska and Zeebie acted as educational ambassadors for their species, teaching thousands of people each year about the important role wolves play in their natural habitats. As they move on to a new chapter in life here at Wild Spirit, we're grateful they can continue to do so for our own supporters.



High-content wolfdog, Kovu, and mid-content wolfdog, Kiara, both came to Wild Spirit from a fellow rescue organization in Oklahoma after Kovu began to demonstrate a level of aggression that was unmanageable for his owners. Kiara, on the other hand, was sweet as could be, but in order to keep the pair together (as they had been since Kovu was just a baby), the organization asked if we would take them both in. Naturally, we agreed, and since their arrival, both animals have settled in nicely, and even grumpy Kovu has started building relationships with some of our Animal Caretakers!

Kovu



Kiara

Zeppelin

In January of 2022, we were contacted about Zeppelin, a 7-year-old high-content wolfdog that was living as a privately-owned pet in the state of Texas.

Since he was just a pup, Zeppelin was loved and well cared for by his owner, who shared each of her big life experiences with him, including a move to a new home (with a bigger and better enclosure for Z), and the addition of a new "parent" when his owner got married. Initially, Zeppelin welcomed his new mom into his life with slobbery kisses and a wagging tail, but unfortunately, as time went on, his behaviors toward his new owner began to shift in an unexpected and aggressive way, leading them to ask Wild Spirit for assistance.

Since his arrival at Wild Spirit, Zeppelin has presented a mostly calm, shy demeanor. He will approach us for treats and enrichment, but hasn't shown any interest in allowing us to pet him. Thankfully, any aggressive displays he has shown us have been limited so far, and for the most part, it seems like he is just testing our boundaries (as wolfdogs often tend to do). Regardless, he is safe and happy in his new home, and we can't wait to see what his future has in store.

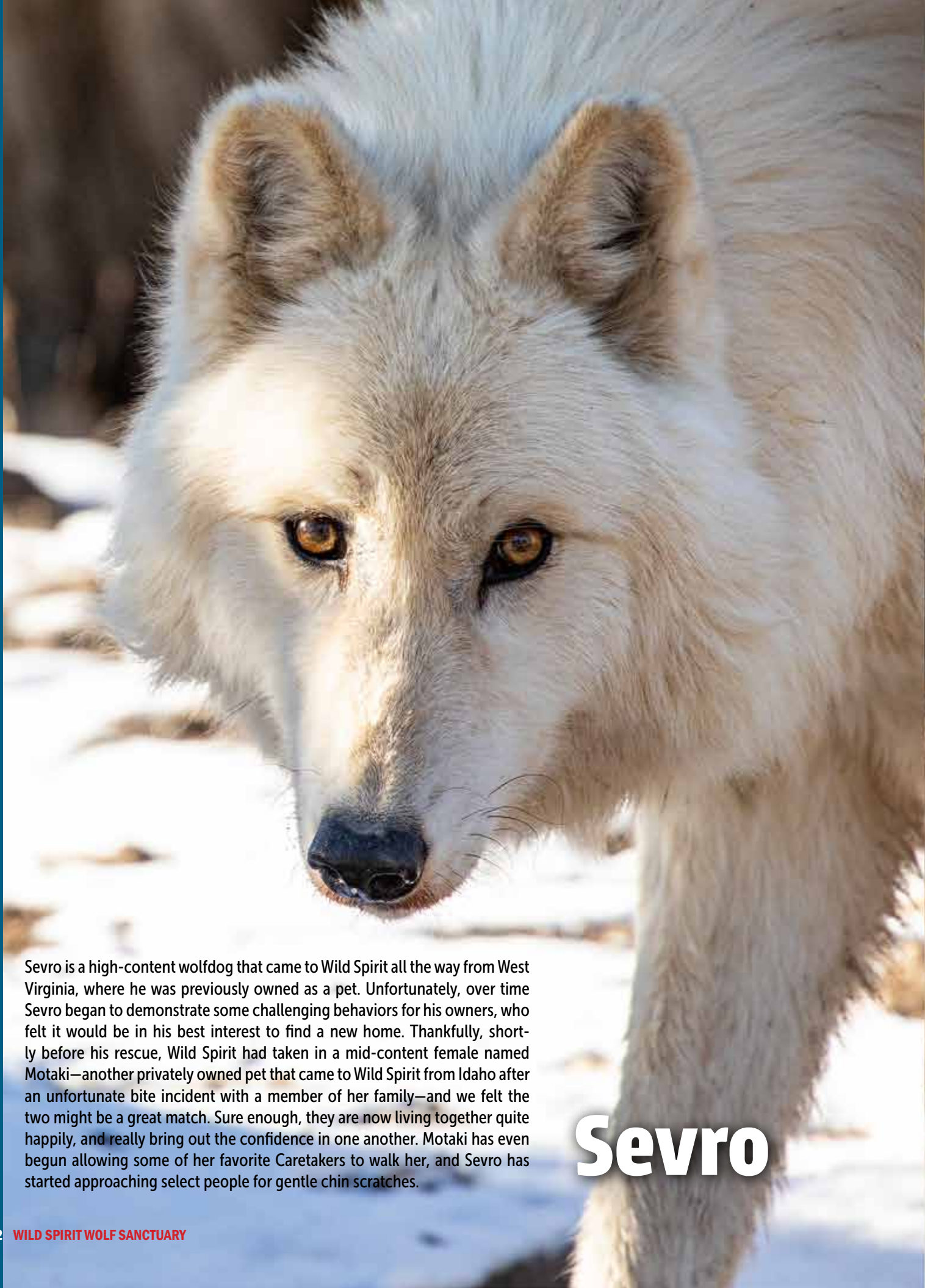
Zion

In January of 2022, we saw a post in an online Wolfdog Rescue Group that showcased a 2-year-old mid-content male looking for a new home after he was found wandering as a stray in Oklahoma, and never claimed by his owners.

Unfortunately, at the time Zion's story was posted, Wild Spirit didn't have an empty enclosure

to take him in. Instead, we asked a fellow rescuer living in Oklahoma if he might be able to foster him until we had a place for him. Thankfully, he agreed, and a few months later we were able to go get our new boy and bring him home!

Today, Zion is living his absolute best life at the sanctuary, where he enjoys playing with his favorite Animal Caretakers, wolfdog neighbors, and new companion, Awilix, who you can read about in our next Howling Reporter! This sweet boy is a bundle of love, and we're so excited to see how he grows in his new home.



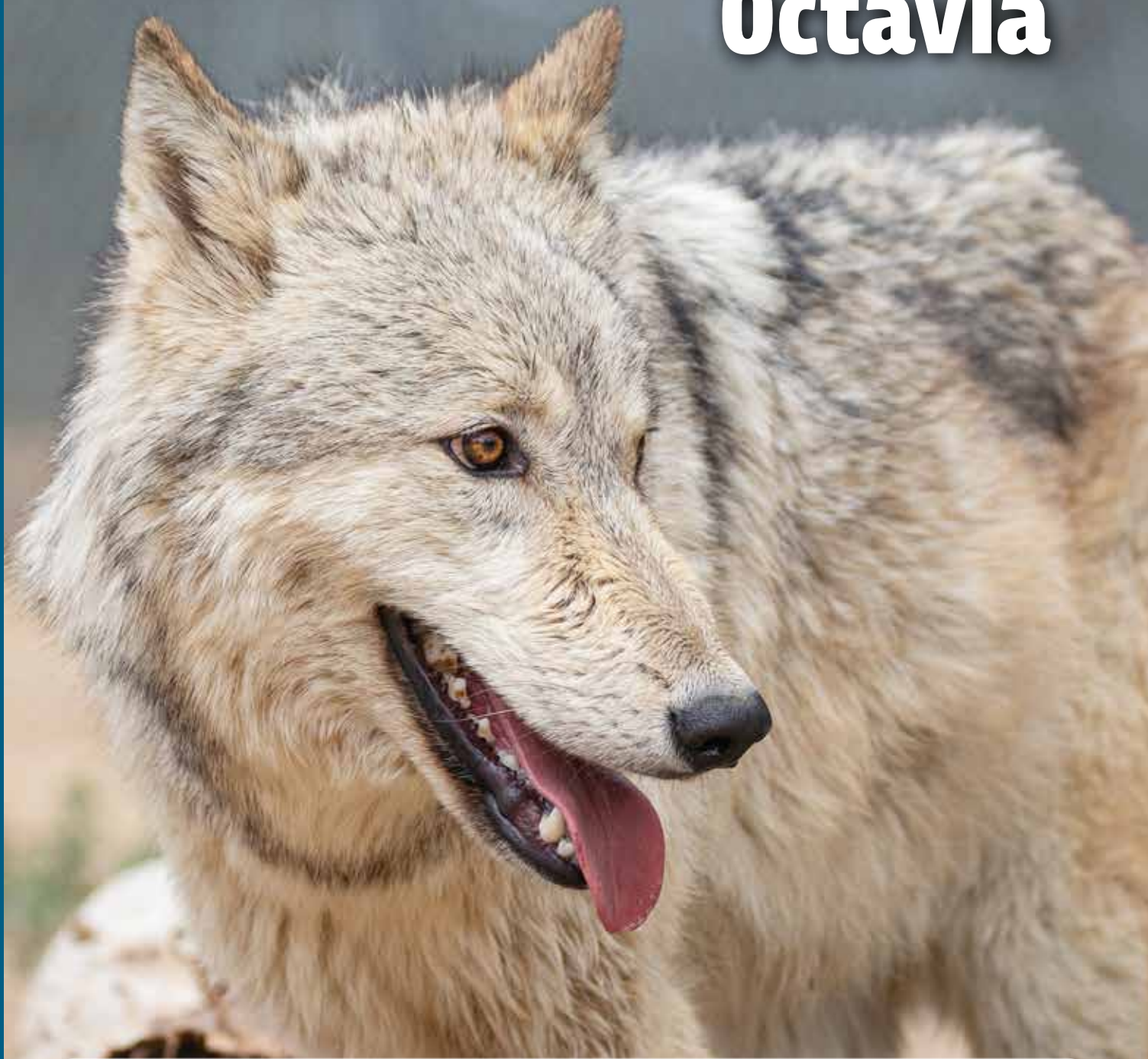
Sevro is a high-content wolfdog that came to Wild Spirit all the way from West Virginia, where he was previously owned as a pet. Unfortunately, over time Sevro began to demonstrate some challenging behaviors for his owners, who felt it would be in his best interest to find a new home. Thankfully, shortly before his rescue, Wild Spirit had taken in a mid-content female named Motaki—another privately owned pet that came to Wild Spirit from Idaho after an unfortunate bite incident with a member of her family—and we felt the two might be a great match. Sure enough, they are now living together quite happily, and really bring out the confidence in one another. Motaki has even begun allowing some of her favorite Caretakers to walk her, and Sevro has started approaching select people for gentle chin scratches.

Sevro



Motaki

Octavia



Octavia is a 1-year-old high-content wolfdog that was rescued from New Jersey where she was previously kept as a pet. Unfortunately, despite how much her family adored her, Octavia's puppy energy was too much for her owner to handle at this stage in her life, so she made the difficult decision to re-home her knowing Wild Spirit could provide her with the space, companionship, and energy she needed to thrive. Since her arrival, Octavia has become a quick favorite of our staff, but she certainly keeps us on our toes with her mischief and "naughty" puppy behaviors! Thankfully, she is incredibly social and trusting of humans - a testament to her previous owners - and is motivated to please, which makes the prospect of behavioral modification much easier!

Since arriving at the sanctuary, Octavia has been paired with a male mid-content wolfdog that is just a year older than her, and the two are an absolute match made in Heaven! While we would love to say more about Octavia's companion, he is part of our "Wolfdog Protection Program," which was created in 2021 with the purpose of keeping the identities of select rescues private for their (or their former owners') protection.

Antoine



Antoine is a 3-year-old mid-content wolfdog with a rocky past. He was originally sold to a private owner whose life got turned upside down, resulting in Antoine and his former companion being placed in a "boarding facility" for an entire year before they were finally re-homed to a woman in California.

Unfortunately, after 2-3 months with his new owner, Antoine began exhibiting unpredictable and aggressive behaviors, particularly while out for walks on leash. She reported that sometimes he was great with no issues, and other times he would lash out without warning and attempt to bite her. With not only her own safety to worry about, but that of her family members, she contacted Wild Spirit to see if we had a place for him.

Since arriving at the sanctuary, Antoine has been the most sweet and social boy, and we have yet to see any signs of aggression toward humans. Today, he is living with a low-content wolfdog named Thistle, who you can read about in the next Howling Reporter!



Balto

Balto is a stunning mid-content wolfdog that spent his first year of life as a privately owned pet in California. Unfortunately, after biting one of his family members, he was taken to a shelter to be euthanized. Thankfully, the shelter staff chose a different path and instead, reached out to a sanctuary in California who agreed to place him.

Like many wolfdogs, Balto has an aversion to men (with a couple of exceptions) that often leads to displays of aggression. These behaviors made it difficult for the staff at the sanctuary—nearly all of which were men—to work with him safely, even after more than a year of trust-building.

Hoping to find a sanctuary in which Balto might feel more comfortable, Wild Spirit was contacted and asked if we could take him in. We agreed and have been beyond impressed with how well he has already started to settle in with us! Today, he is sharing his home with 6-month-old high-content wolfdog Artemis. She, more than any human ever could, has brought him out of his shell and helped him gain the confidence he needed to begin approaching us for love! We are so excited to see how he grows with her, and with us.



Lazar Wolf

In July of 2022, Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary was contacted by a private owner in Ohio who was going through a divorce and, as a result, was in need of placement for his 10-year-old mid-content wolfdog. At the time of this request, we were at max capacity with over 60 rescues in our care, and didn't have room for any new intakes.

However, about two months later, we ended up losing one of our senior rescues, Azteca, leaving behind the last of her siblings, 15-year-old Juno, who we knew would probably love a new companion after losing her sister.

With our next "perfect match" in mind, we made the trip from New Mexico to Ohio, where we were introduced to an incredibly sweet old man named Lazar Wolf (Lazar for short, named after a character from Fiddler on the Roof). We knew immediately he would be the perfect fit for Juno, and sure enough, the two were an instant match!



Beans

In the fall of 2021, Wild Spirit was contacted by a private owner and fellow rescuer who explained that due to unforeseen life changes (including an upcoming relocation to a county in which wolfdog ownership is illegal), she may need to re-home her 2-year-old female, Beans, in the near future...

At the time, nothing was set in stone, as the owner was working with law enforcement officials within the new county to request an exception; however, she wanted to plan ahead in case her request was denied.

Sadly, one of the harsh realities about rescue is that available space is always limited, and even when a spot does open up here at the sanctuary, it's usually not long before it's filled. Knowing this, Beans' owner made the incredibly difficult decision to place her with us before receiving an official response from the county, not wanting the opportunity for safe placement to fall through.

Shortly after Beans arrived at Wild Spirit, we were asked to rescue another young wolfdog—a high-content male named Aragorn—that we just knew would be the perfect match for our social girl. As suspected, the two paired up immediately, and Beans enjoys nothing more than bossing him around, reminding him that their enclosure was her territory first, so he has to follow her rules! Thankfully, Aragorn is happy to oblige.



Aragorn

Aragorn is a 1-year-old high-content wolfdog who came to Wild Spirit in April of 2022. Before his arrival, he was a privately owned pet that was loved unconditionally by his family. Sadly, after his owner experienced a medical emergency and was diagnosed with a life-threatening heart-condition, he made the decision to re-home Aragorn rather than keep him in a world filled with uncertainty.

Since arriving, Aragorn was almost instantly paired up with his companion, an upper-mid content female named Beans who is just one year older than he is. The two make an incredible pair, and we're so excited to see them grow old together at the sanctuary.



PIECE of the PACK

An intern project by Tiffany Rose Thurow

Before I even finished my application to be an Animal Care Intern at Wild Spirit, I knew my intern project was going to revolve around art. Landscapes and animals have always been the compositions that I connect the most with. And with a little brainstorming, the decision to create a piece of merchandise that I always look for when visiting somewhere new became the route to take.

This connection stems from my go-to souvenir. When traveling, I always pick up a postcard, or a handful when the gift shop has too many designs to choose from. I tend to hold on to these 4x6 memories rather than a \$30 hoodie, because it will most likely end up at the thrift store five years down the road. I've also found a postcard holds more value than its simplified use of being sent to a relative or friend.

I've been collecting postcards as a decorative element for the spaces I've lived in for many years, so my collection is very extensive. Being able to look up to the many collages I've created with them allows me to relive the memories those specific places hold with the people I have traveled there with.

After realizing the contribution I could make, I had to put into action. The first step was deciding who was going to be featured on the postcards and how many different designs to make. I was originally going to draw a handful of fan-favorites at the sanctuary, but that idea shifted to animals living on the public tour path, since theirs are the faces the majority of the public were going to see. This decision led to fourteen individual postcards featuring a single rescue or a combo featuring both rescues – or in the case of the dingoes, all three brothers together on one card. Each postcard was created by choosing a selected reference photo which was drawn on Procreate®. When creating a composition, you have to take into account color scheme, orientation of the subject, style, and consistency. Once each reference photo was acquired, I was able to begin crafting each card.

Color is my favorite part when it comes to any art piece, so creating fourteen cards that had a cohesive look when placed next to each other was important.

I chose to go with muted earth tones because they not only look great, but tie into the colors of the landscape where the sanctuary is located. I also drew some inspiration from the retro Works Progress Administration (WPA) National Park posters and postcards; those designs have always won me over when looking at the postcard selection at any of the National Parks I have visited. Once finished with the details of the body, I wanted to keep the background fairly simple, since each rescue is the focal point. An estimated fifty hours was spent placing each individual hair one pen stroke at a time. The perks of using a design software on my iPad instead of creating each composition traditionally meant mistakes could be corrected with the simple click of a button, and placing large blocks of color could occur in seconds.

As an Intern, we focus so much of our time on the animals and completing the day-to-day tasks that help keep the sanctuary functioning, so having the freedom to pursue our other passions through the means of an intern project is beyond fulfilling. During my internship, I not only developed the skills that I need to grow in the field that I aspire to work in, but I also grew as an artist.





Arguably one of the most well-known residents of Wild Spirit, Flurry spent the majority of his life as an Ambassador Animal, allowing him to travel across the country to teach people about the importance of wolves in the wild, and the work we do here at the sanctuary. But as he grew older, he soon let us know that he was ready to “retire” from Ambassador work, ending his career in 2019. Since then, he had lived a relaxing life with companions he loved and Keepers who adored him. In late February, we discovered Flurry was experiencing bloat and gastric torsion—the very things that had caused him to retire from his Ambassador work just a few years earlier. At his age, unfortunately the surgery required to undo the gastric torsion would have been extremely risky, so our team made the very heavy-hearted decision to assist him in passing. Flurry is now with his littermates in our Big Pack in the Sky, and will be dearly missed by many.

Known as our beloved resident tripod, Bono stole the hearts of everyone he met with his sweet disposition and expressive face. He was a determined little guy, overcoming the loss of his front leg back in 2019 as a result of Valley Fever. Despite this, he loved going for walks and playing with his companion, Reba. Unfortunately, after a dramatic decline in health and quality of life, our team had to make the tough decision to help him along. Saying goodbye to Bono was very hard for many of us, but watching him decline in health and physical ability was worse. We know he’s resting easy now, and flying high with our other passed friends.

BIG PACK IN THE SKY

Arya, one of our oldest rescues at 16-years-old, was well known from a large-scale rescue that occurred in 2012. Thanks to the help of Game of Thrones author George R.R. Martin and his wife, Parris, Wild Spirit was able to rescue all 11 high-content wolfdogs that came to be known as the “Westeros Pack.” For a long time, Arya was a companion to high-content wolfdog Chiracowa, who she loved dearly. After Chira’s sudden loss, Arya showed a decline in health and some extreme anxiety as a result of losing him. In the end, her age caught up to her, and after a long goodbye from our team, she was reunited with Chira in our Big Pack in the Sky.

Alice had always been one of our shyer animals, close with her companions and siblings throughout her life, but not as much with people until her older age. Alice was part of one of our Arctic wolf litters who have been at the sanctuary since puppyhood. She spent the last few months of life with her younger sibling, Flurry, who adored her. The two were often seen walking side by side or laying together in the sun. After Alice’s passing, we let her brother say goodbye on his own, in what was one of the most emotional goodbyes we’ve ever seen. Alice now runs with the rest of her siblings in our Big Pack in the Sky.

Affectionately known as “Chira-Chira” by our team, Chiracowa was a sweet boy who loved meeting new people. Unfortunately, his time came before a lot of his Keepers were fully ready to say goodbye. At 12-years-old, Chira developed kidney disease very suddenly, and though our team did everything we could to treat him, he was lost within days of his decline and diagnosis. Chira passed away with his companion, Arya, keeping him company, and our Director found him the next morning, peacefully at rest. Our gentle giant will be greatly missed, as he was a very social animal with lots of human connections. Now he’s over the Rainbow Bridge with the rest of our Big Pack in the Sky.

Affectionately known as “Banana” to the members of our team, Savannah was a very sweet little lady who was a favorite to many of our Keepers. First arriving at Wild Spirit as a baby, she grew into an incredibly confident girl who got along well with humans and animals alike, capturing the hearts of so many people throughout her lifetime. As one of our oldest residents, she shared her life with a number of companions over the years, but none so loved as Arctic wolf, Teton, who she was so desperate to meet that she would practically drag us over to his enclosure during walks, until the day we finally introduced them. It was such a perfect pairing that after their first meeting Savannah never left, and Teton doted on her every single day. Unfortunately, old age eventually caught up to our sweet girl, and on a snowy morning in February, she let us know she was ready to say goodbye. No longer in pain, she’s running free with the rest of her siblings, over the Rainbow Bridge.



ENRICHMENT with Heart

BY DANIELLE STEAKLEY
ENRICHMENT COORDINATOR

BONUS: At home enrichment!

Danielle showing off the cookies she made for habitat mates, Leia and Draco.



This year, one of our goals was to amp up the holiday fun for everyone—humans and animals alike! We wanted to start the 2022 holidays off with a bang and some very large Valentines were just the way to do it. Our rescues had never had cookies like these before, and by the way they gobbled them up, we knew they weren't disappointed!

We conducted our annual Facebook Livestream on February 15th, where we gave out oatmeal cookies to the animals in the lower compound of the sanctuary. For the livestream, 10 extra-large, 5 medium, and 2 small cookies were made. Because the cookies were so large, I made multiple batches of the recipe: 23 batches of oatmeal cookies and 3 batches of frosting in red, pink, and purple in total. Each cookie had the animal's name, a cute saying, and/or decorations painted in frosting.

You can see the recipe on page 27, along with some enrichment ideas you can do at home, with your own canines!



Male Arctic wolf, Teton (top) and female mid-content wolfdog, Kiara (inset) enjoying their cookies.

DO-IT-YOURSELF Enrichment At Home



We often see enrichment in sanctuaries and zoos, but it can also be utilized for pets at home! In fact, most pet owners provide their animals enrichment without even realizing it. Playing with pets and taking them on walks are examples of enrichment you're probably doing at home, but we want to show you other ways to enrich your animals and add some variety to their lives.

Enrichment stimulates an animal's mind, body, and senses, as it's important for them to have an outlet for energy, and different ways to learn and problem-solve. That way, animals can avoid becoming bored and have a fulfilling life. As long as it's safe for the animals, enrichment is limited only to the imagination. It can be the smallest thing, like hiding a treat in your house for your cat to find, or building an elaborate obstacle course for your dog in the backyard. There are many different ways to categorize types of enrichment. Here

at Wild Spirit, we use the following categories: Food, Sensory (relating to all senses), Environmental (rocks, stumps, toys), Cognitive (puzzles), Social (training, socializing), and Walk enrichment.

Today's example of enrichment you can do at home utilizes toilet paper or paper towel rolls. The types of animals you can do this enrichment with include (but is certainly not limited to) dogs, cats, birds, rodents, and reptiles. For this enrichment you can spray pet-safe scents (perfume, cologne, or essential oil sprays) on the rolls and/or fill them with treats or foods that are safe for animals. The handy thing about this enrichment is that it's easy to collect the toilet paper or paper towel rolls. It's also likely that you already have treats at home that you can fill them with. The cool thing about enrichment is you can also use the animal's regular diet instead of treats, thus adding a little fun to meal times.

Some Cardboard Roll Ideas

Left Open - For a shy or old animal that needs an easy first win. The food in the tube will easily be knocked out when the animal touches the roll. You can even have the treat sticking out of the tube for them to see if they're nervous of new objects. This will help them get used to the enrichment and find it rewarding instead of scary.

Folded - Add in any pet-safe spices or food and fold both ends in.

Tootsie Roll™ or wrapped in paper - Wrap the roll in paper (newspaper, cardstock, tissue paper, etc.) and stuff the ends of the paper into the roll, or twist the ends of the paper like a candy wrapper.

Decorated - This can be done to any of the above options using pet-safe markers, paints, etc. Feel free to draw on the cardboard or paper any design you would like.

Enrichment is important for any animal living under human care, even our pets at home, so we hope you'll enjoy trying this with your pets, and letting your imagination run wild! Additionally, we hope to continue sharing examples of pet-friendly enrichment in each of our Howling Reporters, so stay tuned for more fun activities, and feel free to let us know how they go!



Some examples of the cardboard roll enrichment we do here at the sanctuary.



Dingo, Glacier, eyes his oatmeal cookie treat.

Wild Spirit Animal Safe Oatmeal Cookie Recipe

(Makes about 12 cookies)

Cookie ingredients

5 cups of oatmeal (made with water and oats)
4 oz of peanut butter
1/4 cup melted coconut oil

Frosting ingredients

1 cup water
1 1/4 cups wheat flour
Add a little extra flour or water to get your desired decorating consistency

Steps

Prepare the oatmeal, then add the peanut butter and melted coconut oil. Mold the "dough" into your choice of shapes on a baking sheet and freeze for 1 hour, or until the cookies have hardened.

Mix the water and flour into a bowl and add pet-safe food coloring, if desired. Remove cookies from the freezer and frost. Place them back into the freezer for 1 hour, or until the frosting has hardened. Cookies can be given straight from the freezer. Enjoy!

WOLVES & RAVENS

A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP



Photo by Uryadnikov Sergey - stock.adobe.com

If you've ever visited us here at Wild Spirit, you've likely noticed the vast number of ravens that seem to call our sanctuary home. If you've visited other sanctuaries or zoos with wolves, it's likely you'll see the same. They love to land right next to our animals in their enclosures, play in the snow around the courtyard during winter, and even tease our rescues while they're trying to enjoy a tasty bone. We've even had ravens try to sneak off with our animals' meat medication balls or snacks! Seeing all sorts of ravens around isn't just due to our altitude or climate, there's actually a bigger part of nature at play.

Ravens are part of the corvid family, and arguably the most intelligent species of bird on the planet. With their massive brains and omnivorous diet, they're incredibly adaptable to their environments. In addition, ravens have an attraction to shiny or glittery objects, can remember human faces, and can form family relationships and pass on generational knowledge, much like us humans. They're known to spend time playing alone or in groups, and learning to use nature's tools to get what they need. Ravens are so intelligent, they've even been observed

pulling fishing line from water to pull a fish off a hook with their beak and claws.

Now, why would an intelligent bird like the raven hang around a dangerous predator like a wolf? Both of these intelligent creatures have a very special and symbiotic relationship, and have been seen together for centuries by many cultures, some even going so far as to refer to ravens as "wolfbirds". Ravens, a scavenger bird, often look to large predators like wolves as potential food providers, as a big part of a raven's diet is carrion: decaying flesh, or already dead animals. And what better place to find carrion than animals that died of natural causes, or more often, from being hunted by animals like wolves?

Yellowstone National Park biologists who have been closely observing the reintroduced pack of wolves in their park have noticed that not only do ravens benefit greatly from wolves, but it even works the other way around. Ravens will often circle the sky above injured, young, or sick animals like elk and deer, and wolves have been observed taking this behavior as a cue for a hunt. It's believed that sometimes wolves will even follow ravens'

calls, as they make loud excited noises when they find a carcass. Ravens have even been observed leading wolves to carcasses that they cannot tear into on their own.

Wolves, despite what most may think, are not very good hunters—usually only making a kill one every ten tries—so they'll often prey on weak animals. When a wolf pack makes a kill, ravens are often first on the scene. The average number of ravens present after a wolf hunt is usually upwards of 30 at a time! These birds will carry away chunks of carcass to store for later, even while the wolves are feasting right there. While this may sound like ravens are taking advantage of wolves rather than behaving symbiotically, it's been observed and written by Bernd Heinrich that ravens actually repay the wolves by acting as "guard dogs" for them, funnily enough. Bernd Heinrich writes, "At a kill site, the birds are more suspicious and alert than wolves. The birds serve the wolves as an extra pair of eyes and ears." This is especially true as they often carry off chunks of food to safer places.

When not working together for their next meal, ravens and wolves have even been seen playing together. Ravens are highly social animals, and have especially been seen interacting with pups and yearlings, grabbing sticks and playing tug of war with the puppies. These intelligent birds will even fly over young canines with sticks or small bones to tease them, getting them to jump up and to try and grab them, or even try to initiate playing by bravely tugging on their tails or fur. Some scientists believe that individual ravens may even develop special bonds with singular wolves in a pack, just like they do with each other. Sometimes wolf pups will chase ravens themselves, and ravens will play back by diving towards the ground, then swooping away.

Though we don't have pups or the need for hunting here, lots of this behavior can be observed in captivity too. One of our rescues, Kiska, loves to chase ravens around her enclosure, only for them to fly away, then land right back where they started. We've even seen ravens land right next to our wolves while they are enjoying their food or

a tasty bone, just to sneak away with a chunk of meat or a small discarded bone. Very frequently, we find bones littered around the sanctuary outside of enclosures from where ravens have snuck them away from our animals and dropped them out of trees. On some unique occasions, we have tossed bones into enclosures, had them get stuck in a tree, and had a raven pull them out and drop them for us!

A notable relationship between these wonderful creatures is that of our Arctic wolf, Teton, and half a dozen ravens. In his younger years, Teton loved to climb up on the wooden house in his enclosure to eat his food or chomp on bones, and we always saw a handful of ravens joining him. Some would stand right next to him, and he never minded! We were always shocked when he'd let a bird take a piece of food right from between his paws, with never a care.

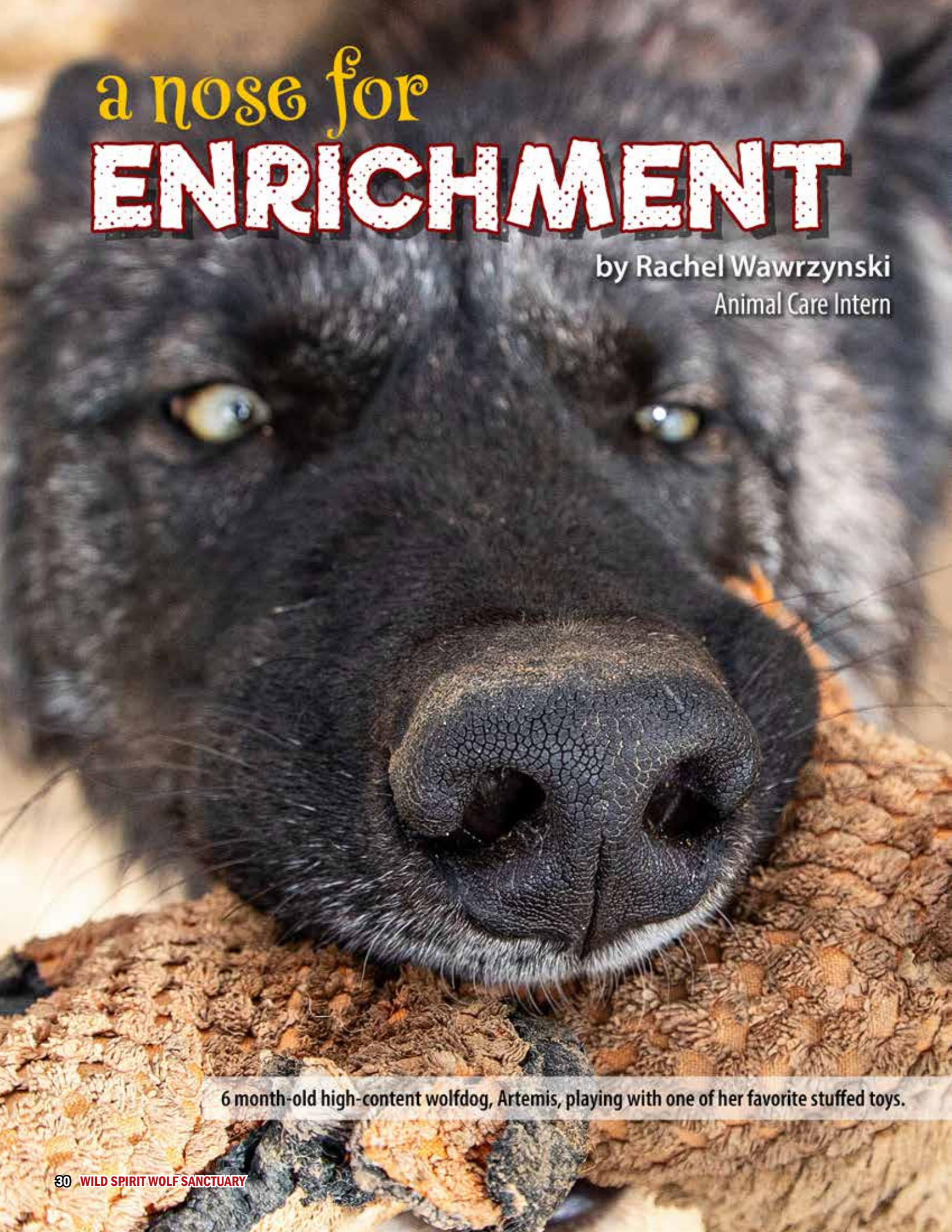
It's not just wolves the ravens will form relationships with. There's even a few ravens around the sanctuary that our staff and interns have come to recognize based on the way they look or act. It's always fun to see them playing in the snow in winter, or resting in the shade with our wolves in the summer. It's a little less fun when they pull our trash out of the dumpster and throw it around, though. As mentioned before, ravens can remember human faces and are attracted to shiny or glittery objects, too. Sometimes we'll find coins, pieces of shiny metal, or colored stones and marbles on our tour path or in our courtyard, usually dropped by ravens. We like to think of these as gifts from them!

Of course, we all love wolves, but it's also wonderful to learn out about other species and the bonds they share with our canine friends. These unique creatures have formed an amazing and mutually-beneficial relationship over hundreds of years of evolution, in which both species respect each other, play together, and share resources. This special relationship is a beautiful reminder that everything in nature is connected, and reliant on others to survive. 🐺

When a wolf pack makes a kill, ravens are often first on the scene.

a nose for ENRICHMENT

by Rachel Wawrzynski
Animal Care Intern



6 month-old high-content wolfdog, Artemis, playing with one of her favorite stuffed toys.

Enrichment is a very important part of our rescues' lives, and there are multiple types of enrichment meant to stimulate the senses and different areas of the brain – cognitive, environmental, food, social, and sensory. Sensory enrichment is anything that engages an animal's sense of touch, taste, sight, sound, or smell. While all five categories of enrichment are essential in combating boredom and stress, sensory enrichment, and more specifically scents, are intriguing for animals and aid in maintaining a highly developed olfactory system.

For a pack of wolves living in the wild, a keen sense of smell is a necessity. Wolves often travel until they detect the scent of a prey species, and will then follow that smell directly to the prey in an attempt to capture it. Hunting is not the only area of a wolf's life where scent is important, though. They also use this sense to locate other pack members or rivals. Their olfactory systems are so perceptive that they can identify age, gender, diet, general health conditions, and breeding conditions of other individuals!

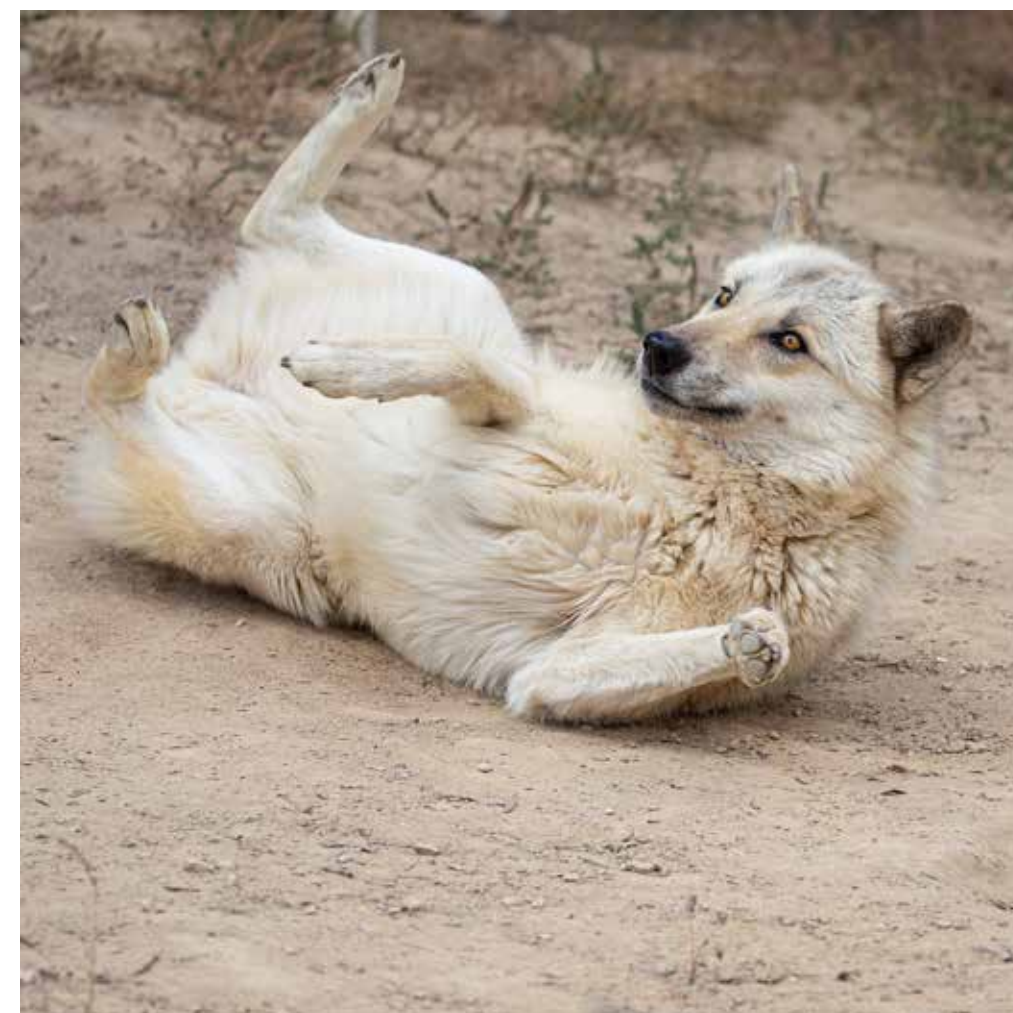
Wild canid olfactory systems have not been studied in depth, but researchers have spent considerable time studying those of domestic dogs. A dog has an olfactory system approximately fourteen times larger than that of a human. This approximation yields an odor detecting ability up to one hundred times more sensitive than a human being's. However, this is the nose of a domestic dog; a wolf relies on these senses for survival, so we can be sure that a wolf has an even stronger olfactory system!

Because the olfactory system is so complex, it is crucial to provide enrichment that stimulates it. At Wild Spirit, we do this in multiple ways. We have diluted scents – diluted so as not to overstimulate the system – such as blueberry muffin, vanilla, and pumpkin to spray along fence lines and on objects inside enclosures. Depending on the scent and the animal's reaction to it, they may spend minutes investigating, scent-rubbing, or even peeing on the affected area. A favorite amongst all the rescues is elk and cow estrus because it imitates a natural scent.

Lobo and Flicker can't get enough of it! We also use pet-safe spices in small quantities, which can be bought in a grocery store. These spices are intended for animals to roll in and rub on rather than ingest. Common pet-safe spices for this purpose are cloves, cinnamon, and oregano. As we walk through enclosures, we'll sprinkle some on the ground and let them investigate. Some animals, like Draco, Aleu, Kabbalah, and Crow, are so intrigued by the scents that they flop onto the ground and spend minutes rolling around in them.

One of the best things about scent enrichment is that it's often an easy, inexpensive way to encourage use of a system that can sometimes be overlooked. While in captivity or domestic living situations, the olfactory system can degrade over time with infrequent use. But with a little investigative work, anyone can provide their animal with new and fun smells to keep the senses sharp.

You can visit seethewolves.com/enrichment-ideas for more information on safe ways to engage your own canines!



Leia enjoying interesting smells by scent-rolling.

Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary

HC 61 Box 28
Ramah, NM 87321

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
ABQ NM
Permit No. 674



Former staff member, Carlee Horstmann, and recent rescue, Zion, enjoy their new friendship. Zion will be happy when Carlee returns (and so will we)!

WILDSPIRITWOLFSANCTUARY.ORG

Visit us online for information about our various tours and how you can help us continue our mission. Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit corporation licensed and regulated by the USDA, as well as a Class C exhibitor. Federal Tax ID # 85-0424026



COMING SOON!

Spend an evening with us, and tour the sanctuary while our rescues are most active!

Afterward, sit around the campfire and learn more interesting facts about our various species!

Once we finish for the evening, return to your campsite and spend the night being serenaded by the rescues!